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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The six titles deal with the following topics: (1) the role of adversative connectives in helping good and poor readers to integrate textual information; (2) trends in written products of general writing, basic writing, and basic reading and writing students; (3) an integrated reading/writing curriculum; (4) the effect of paraphrase writing on sixth grade children's comprehension and recall of expository text; (5) the effects of sentence combining on eighth grade students' written syntactic ability and reading comprehension; and (6) the interrelationship between literature and composition. (HTH)

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Goldsmith, Ellen

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ROLE
OF ADVERSATIVE CONNECTIVES
IN HELPING GOOD AND POOR
READERS TO INTEGRATE INFOR-
MATION IN TEXT

Hjelmervik, Karen Marea

TRENDS IN THE WRITTEN PRO-
DUCTS OF GENERAL WRITING,
BASIC WRITING AND BASIC
READING AND WRITING STUDENTS
ACROSS FOUR POINTS IN TIME

Merkel, Barbara Ganzglass

AN INTEGRATED READING/WRITING
CURRICULUM

Shugarman, Sherrie Lynne

THE EFFECT OF PARAPHRASE
WRITING ON SIXTH GRADE
CHILDREN'S COMPREHENSION
AND RECALL EXPOSITORY TEXT

Trivelli, Elaine Amelia

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF
SENTENCE COMBINING ON
EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS'
WRITTEN SYNTACTIC ABILITY
AND READING COMPREHENSION

Wright, Stephen Caldwell

THE NATIVE CHORD: PROGRESSION
OF CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ROLE OF ADVERSATIVE CONNECTIVES IN HELPING GOOD AND POOR READERS TO INTEGRATE INFORMATION IN TEXT Order No. DA8322204

GOLDSMITH, ELLEN, Ed.D. *Columbia University Teachers College*, 1983. 171pp. Sponsors: Professor Dorothy Strickland, Professor Clifford Hill

The purpose of this study was to examine differences between good and poor readers' reliance on and sensitivity to adversative connectives. Subjects included seventy good readers and seventy poor readers who took a test consisting of a reading instrument and a writing instrument during a class period of fifty to sixty minutes.

The experimenter-constructed reading instrument consisted of ten paragraphs of comparison-contrast taken from the *World Book Encyclopedia*. In one version, the adversative connectives were present and in the other, they were deleted. Paragraphs exemplified three functions of adversative connectives: contrast or conflict, parallel points, and foregrounding information. An informational question requiring the integration of pre- and post-connective material followed each passage. A writing instrument required students to transform contrastive information in outline form into a paragraph.

In terms of main effects, all readers performed better in relation to the test version with connectives. In terms of differential effects on good and poor readers, there were three interesting findings.

First, the finding that adversative connectives helped poor readers to exclude irrelevant information was discussed in terms of their function as a clue to paragraph organization, as a tool to activate schemata, and as an aid to deeper processing. Second, the finding that poor readers included more connectives in their responses to the reading instrument with connectives was explained as a reflection of a copying phenomenon or of a deeper level of processing. The deeper level of processing was discussed in terms of a production deficiency.

Third, the finding that good readers performed better where adversative connectives functioned to foreground information suggested that other linguistic resources did not serve as clearly as in the functions of contrast or conflict and parallel points so that the connectives did have a facilitating effect.

Pedagogical implications concern the desirability of instruction in the uses and functions of adversative connectives, the importance of linking reading and writing instruction, and the positive impact of adversative connectives on readability.

TRENDS IN THE WRITTEN PRODUCTS OF GENERAL WRITING, BASIC WRITING AND BASIC READING AND WRITING STUDENTS ACROSS FOUR POINTS IN TIME

Order No. DA8318184

HJELMERVIK, KAREN MAREA, Ph.D. *University of Pittsburgh*, 1982. 114pp.

This study describes the trends in 260 papers written by incoming students in each of three levels of composition at the University of Pittsburgh: General Writing, Basic Writing and Basic Reading and Writing. Four in-class essays were administered in each class. The first one was the placement essay students wrote prior to entering, and the other three were written during weeks 5, 10 and 15 in the term. A total of 260 papers were scored for three main factors: holistic scores based on a 1-4 scale; syntactic maturity scores, based on words per T-Unit and words per clause, and error, based on counts from five main categories: paragraph, sentence, constituent, word and punctuation.

The results indicated that the Basic Reading and Writing students improved the most in all scores, achieving Basic Writing competence levels during the term. Basic Writing students achieved General Writing competence levels, and General Writing students demonstrated the least change. The most significant differences were

in error comparisons, indicating that even poorly prepared writers can improve dramatically in one term. Sentence level error identified lower competence students more than any other, with punctuation errors second.

The most significant results, however, are the trends indicating inconsistent improvement across the term, with some error emerging while others receded. Furthermore, the results indicate that pre- and post-test data do not necessarily reflect the achievement of students, for on many variables, the students did not perform nearly as well on the final task as on mid-term tasks. Therefore, simple pre- post-designs cannot insightfully indicate the progress that students make during a term.

AN INTEGRATED READING/WRITING CURRICULUM.

Order No. DA8316886

MERKEL, BARBARA GANZGLASS, Ed.D. *Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*, 1983. 325pp.

This study develops an integrated reading/writing curriculum for the "new" college students. It is based on four assumptions: the reading of long, complete selections (books, speeches, essays) facilitates comprehension; the writing of at least three hundred word essays improves writing ability; writing is a recursive process; collaborative learning is valuable because it enables students and teachers to share power and responsibility for planning and evaluating not only course content but also student and teacher performance. The assumptions are derived from the theories of cognitive structure and psycholinguistics, particular composition and writing theories, and the psychological theories of Carl Rogers. All these theories explore how one grows in understanding and becomes a mature reader and writer. The proposed curriculum is complete and ready for use as a pattern in an actual classroom. The study analyzes the curriculum and finds it has remained true to its theoretical base. The study concludes that a non-directive, humanities-based curriculum can be developed for non-traditional college students in a formal educational setting. In addition, it can include components which help these students learn how to improve their reading and writing abilities. For future research, I suggest the curriculum be tested in both urban and rural settings, and that others may wish to experiment with different humanist and/or liberal arts curricula.

THE EFFECT OF PARAPHRASE WRITING ON SIXTH GRADE CHILDREN'S COMPREHENSION AND RECALL EXPOSITORY TEXT

Order No. DA8321059

SHUGARMAN, SHERRIE LYNNE, Ph.D. *Claremont Graduate School*, 1983. 119pp.

The present study investigated the effect of paraphrase writing on sixth grade children's comprehension and recall of an expository science passage. The four treatments were: paraphrasing a passage, copying a passage, reading paraphrases of a passage, and studying a passage. The dependent measures were the number of propositions, generalizations, and details that were recalled; the number of connective and informational elaborations that were made; and the number of correct answers to probed recall questions. Children who paraphrased the passage were expected to perform better on all dependent measures than children who copied the passage. Also, children who read paraphrases of the passage were expected to perform better on all dependent measures than children who studied the passage. The results of the study demonstrated that paraphrasers made significantly more informational elaborations than children who copied the passage. Additional results revealed that reading grade

level affected the number of propositions and details that were recalled and the number of informational elaborations that were made. Finally, a correlation was found between the number of propositions recalled and the number of informational elaborations made suggesting that variation in recall may be related to the elaborations produced during study. Implications for future research and instructional strategies are discussed.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF SENTENCE COMBINING ON EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS' WRITTEN SYNTACTIC ABILITY AND READING COMPREHENSION Order No. DA8314388

TRIVELLI, ELAINE AMELIA, Ph.D. *The University of Akron*, 1983. 278pp.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between traditional grammar instruction and a transformational-generative sentence-combining program with respect to reading comprehension and written syntactic maturity of eighth-grade subjects. Reading comprehension was measured by the Stanford Achievement Test, a grade-level cloze test, and a difficult cloze test controlled for readability and syntactic maturity levels. Syntactic maturity was measured by mean words per T-unit calculated from a 300-word writing sample of three modes of discourse. In addition, this study sought to determine if scores in reading comprehension and syntactic maturity were differentially affected across the variables of IQ, type of reader, or sex. Finally, an examination of any relationships between gain scores in various pre- and posttests of writing and reading was made.

This investigation was conducted with eighth-grade subjects during the first semester of the 1981-82 school year. Approximately 30 hours of class time as well as 8 hours of homework time were spent in cued and noncued sentence combining or traditional grammar lessons.

Campbell and Stanley's Solomon Four-Group Design was chosen for the study with random assignment of classes to one of the four treatment groups used in this design. The statistical procedure chosen to analyze the data was multiple linear regression.

The data showed differential effects for the two types of treatment across sex in the more difficult cloze reading measure and across type of reader and sex on the grade-level cloze measure. Therefore, main effects were unable to be analyzed for these two criterion variables. Nonsignificant differences existed in scores from the Stanford Achievement Test and the mean words per T-unit. Due to the multiple comparisons used in the study, a conservative alpha level was used. However, the results at the unadjusted alpha level indicated significance for written syntactic ability in favor of students using the sentence-combining method of instruction. Also, statistically significant correlations between gain scores in written syntactic maturity with gains in the Stanford Achievement Test in Reading Comprehension and the Difficult Cloze Test were found. Finally, correlations in gains between the standardized and cloze scores were nonsignificant.

THE NATIVE CHORD: PROGRESSION OF CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING Order No. DA8315537

WRIGHT, STEPHEN CALOWELL, Ph.D. *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*, 1983. 290pp. Chairman: Malcolm Hayward

The use of literature to teach composition concerns many instructors of Freshman English. Excluding departmental guidelines, how this literature is used often depends on individual inclinations of instructors. Whether the instructor uses the literature as a model for imitation, as a subject for writing, or as a repository of ideas for discussion, he must face the difficult task of integrating the literature with the composition process. This study looks at the interrelationship between literature and composition in the classroom and shows ways

by which first, students can learn to appreciate literature as a reflection of the day-to-day activities of man in general; second, how this appreciation can, in turn, broaden students' thinking; and third, how students learn to express these expanded thoughts in effective writing.

This study is theoretically based on Piaget's idea of self-regulation as it relates to the three basic principles of learning: one, learning as an active process; two, the relativity of perspectives; and three, intellectual activity based on actual experience. The aims and ideas of this study adhere to the premise that one's intellectual development and reasoning ability advance from a less to a more integrated, universal level and rest on the Native Chord: Questions by Which to Explore Literature, to Gain an Understanding of Values Through Association, and to Increase Critical Thought in Writing.

The major findings include: one, literature, the literary essay included, is perhaps one of the swifter avenues to good critical thinking and, since it concerns life-matters, provides the student with a link to expressed ideas which easily become subjects for thought and, therefore, also for writing; two, as a repository of ideas, literature becomes the catalyst to an otherwise untapped reservoir of ideas, emotions, and expressions; and three, literature offers a precedent for students who need reassurance of their innermost thoughts. Having this opportunity to view within literature experiences similar to their own encouraged students to engage in an exchange of reactions to what they have read. These findings are directly related to several major conclusions. First, open exploration of literature as an art form and of reading as a human activity. . . . (Author's abstract exceeds stipulated maximum length. Discontinued here with permission of author.) UMI

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